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INTEGRATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[15 January 2002]

*This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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ENG

1 – In the early years of the 21st century we shall be pleased to see the increased awareness and commitments for the prevention and fight against violence against women and girls in various societies and governments' attempts to reform their policies; this is an achievement that interdepartmental mechanisms, national guidelines and policies dealing with violence against women, particularly for young girls, are taking shape.

2 – The daily increase in awareness regarding all forms of violence against women and the classification and the analysis of the causes can be seen as a positive step towards the elimination of violence against women. We are witnessing an increase of recognition of this problem and the attention of governments and civil societies towards the subject of violence, and we are pleased to hear about improvements in the provision of services to women and young girls as victims of violence. These have been reported in the final document of the Beijing + 5.

3 – The truth however is that there are obstacles on the way, and just a glancing recognition is not enough to get rid of the problem. Essential attempts should be made for the elimination of violence and the in-depth identification of its causes and roots. It seems that special attention should be paid upon to the dominant attitude about forms of domestic violence that are mostly considered as private issues. This attitude should be changed and these acts of violence should be regarded as violence against women. It is a fact that the synergic consequences on society as a whole would be much more than the consequences on an individual basis.

4 – The trafficking in women, domestic violence and other forms of violence against women are common pains of the various societies. Appropriate measures should be foreseen and adopted for elimination of violence nationally and internationally; and we as an NGOs request for joint cooperation of governments and civil societies towards this process.

5 – As a result of research and studies here in Iran, we have reached to this significant conclusion that, if "violence against women" can be regarded as a 'health priority' by the Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Training, Budget and Planning Organization, Centre for Women's Participation and Welfare Organization, then the government can adopt nation-wide preventive and informative interdepartmental measures and policies that can be implemented through the powerful existing health network (health centres) in Iran.

6 – As you are well aware the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women of the Human Rights Commission of the UN prepared comprehensive reports since 1994 that were focused on different forms of violence against women. It seems that it is necessary to look back at these reports, since a lot of literature have been produced during the past years (after Beijing and Beijing + 5). It can be suggested that, under the present conditions, these reports can be reviewed and new in depth reports on forms of violence against women can be drafted especially in cooperation with the non-governmental organizations that have become active in this field and based on the national mechanisms that have been shaped after Beijing Conference.